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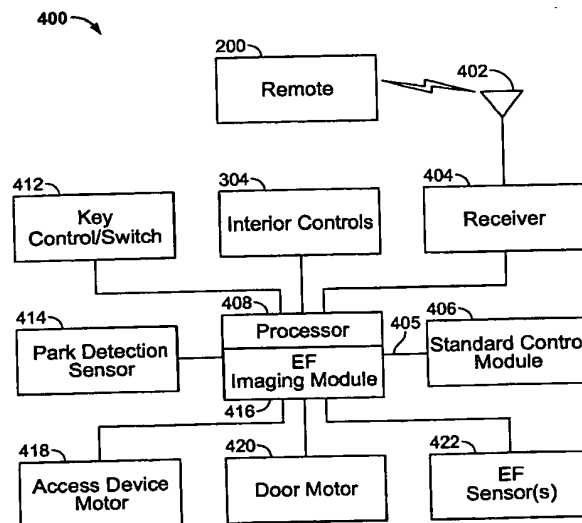
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[Continued on next page]

(54) Title: SYSTEM AND METHOD FOR ELECTRIC FIELD SENSING OF A VEHICLE MOBILITY ACCESS DEVICE



(57) Abstract: Systems and methods are provided for electric field sensing of the presence of an object on a mobility access device (10) such as a wheelchair lift (408) or ramp, and disabling the device from operating. One or more electrodes (422) are installed on a wheelchair lift (418) or ramp to produce electric fields. An electric field imaging device receives inputs from the electrodes, and is able to discriminate changes in the electric field. By connecting the electric field imaging device to a controller (408), several electrodes may be selected sequentially to detect an object in various locations, or to determine an object's size and shape. When the electric field imaging device senses an object, the controller, in communication with the electric field imaging device (416), can display a vehicle function such as storage of a wheelchair lift (418), so that user injuries are prevented.

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